

By Jane Koropsak | August 25, 2008
One, Two, Cha-Cha-Cha

If you're at the Brookhaven Center around 7:00 on Friday nights you will easily hear the sound of music and laughter emanating from the North room. They are the sounds of friends, old and new, coming together to socialize and, yes, learn a variety of dances including west coast Swing, the Hustle, country line dancing and, of course, the Cha-Cha.

As part of the Brookhaven Employee Recreation Association, the Social and Cultural Club, which sponsors the Friday night get-togethers, has found a way to blend friendship, dancing, music, and fun. "It's about enjoying the art of dance with others," said Rudy Alforque, the club organizer. "Everyone enjoys learning new steps and we have shared many laughs along the way. I enjoy meeting new people, both from BNL and from neighboring communities."



Members of the club agree. "The BNL Social and Cultural Club provides an enjoyable venue for an eclectic mix of dance music and people of different cultures," said BNLER Omar Gould.

Karl Britz of Hampton Bays and Linda Nelson of Southampton said they learned about the Lab's Friday night gathering through the Long Island dancing "grapevine." Nelson, a student at Arthur Murray's School of Dance, said, "Dancing is a big part of my life and I really enjoy being part of this club."

Mastic Beach resident Larry Tellefsen and his wife Elyse have been coming to the Friday night socials for quite a while. "This is a great night out and a great way to end the work week," he said. "When we dance at parties and people ask us where we learned to dance, I invite them to join us at the Lab on Friday nights. I tell them the people there are just friends you haven't met yet."

Emil Mollik of Speonk enjoys the chance to get dressed up, go out and have fun. "Everyone is so nice. They're pretty good dancers too. It makes me feel like I'm on the Lawrence Welk Show," he said enthusiastically.

Alforque says the club has continued to grow and currently has about 30 regular attendees. The club provides refreshments starting at 7:00 every Friday night. The dance instructions are from 7:45 to 9:15, followed by open dancing to a D.J. or live band until 11:30.

All are encouraged to join in. "The more the merrier," said Alforque.